

Human Resources Legislative Update

Amended Ontario Anti-Bullying Bill Ordered for Third Reading

Date: May 31, 2012

On May 30, 2012, [Bill 13, the *Accepting Schools Act, 2012*](#), was reported back to the House as amended by the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

The proposed Committee amendments are extensive. Of particular note, Bill 13 now:

- contains a revised definition of “bullying”;
- adopts a definition of “cyber-bullying” that essentially tracks the definition proposed in the Opposition’s private member anti-bullying bill, [Bill 14, the *Anti-Bullying Act, 2011*](#);
- incorporates “gender identity” and “gender expression” into proposed amendments to subsection [169.1 \(1\) of the *Education Act*](#) (“Act”) (Part VI, Duties and Powers of Boards);
- proposes a requirement under section [170 \(1\) of the Act](#) (Duties of boards) for boards to develop (i) annual professional development programs to educate teachers and other staff about bullying prevention and strategies for promoting positive school climates; and (ii) programs, interventions or other supports for pupils who have been bullied, pupils who have witnessed incidents of bullying and pupils who have engaged in bullying, and the programs, interventions and other supports that may be provided by social workers, psychologists or other professionals;
- imposes a new duty on the principal to investigate;
- provides for mandatory notice to a parent or guardian of (a) a pupil who the principal believes has been harmed; and (b) any pupil of the school who the principal believes has engaged in the activity that resulted in the harm;
- requires the Minister to develop a model bullying prevention and intervention plan, with prescribed content, to assist boards in establishing bullying prevention and intervention plans under section 303.3 of the Act; and
- imposes an annual reporting obligation in respect of suspensions and expulsions.